HR Professionals in Canada and the US: A Cross-Cultural Study on the Views of Work-Life Balance and Workaholism

Amie Keefer
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HR Professionals in Canada and the US: A Cross-Cultural Study on the Views of Work-Life Balance and Workaholism

Abstract
The purpose of this paper was to define WLB, to determine if there is a difference between the US and Canada in terms of Work-Life Balance and Workaholism, and to make recommendations to organizations about WLB. First the history of both concepts including previous research was reviewed. The results from this study were presented in a format that examines what past research says on the subject. The researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews with professionals in the Human Resources field to learn about perceptions of trends. In brief, this study found there to be no universal definition of WLB. Second, there are not many differences in approach to WLB between US and Canadian organizations. Last, there is a large list of trends that HR professionals should be aware of in the future, including eldercare, health care and flexibility. It is possible for the US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options.

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HR Professionals in Canada and the US:
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Amie Keefer
April 20, 2004

A final project submitted to the faculty of St. John Fisher College for completion of a
Master of Science Degree in Human Resource Development.
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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to define WLB, to determine if there is a difference between the US and Canada in terms of Work-Life Balance and Workaholism, and to make recommendations to organizations about WLB. First the history of both concepts including previous research was reviewed. The results from this study were presented in a format that examines what past research says on the subject. The researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews with professionals in the Human Resources field to learn about perceptions of trends. In brief, this study found there to be no universal definition of WLB. Second, there are not many differences in approach to WLB between US and Canadian organizations. Last, there is a large list of trends that HR professionals should be aware of in the future, including eldercare, health care and flexibility. It is possible for the US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options.
Chapter 1
Overview

Work-life balance (WLB) has been a topic that is making its way to the forefront of various research endeavors (Seitel, 2003 and Tausig, 2001). WLB has been making the press lately for various reasons, including the rise of dual-career families and the fact that more women are entering the workforce. The Wall Street Journal, for example, has a women's version online, which gives advice on topics such as WLB, financial planning, etc.

Both men and women are challenged by trying to create a balance between their work and their family/personal lives. It is important for people to understand their priorities with regards to work and family. If family comes first, then work may need to be limited to allow this to occur. If work comes first, this places obvious strain on the family, but may be necessary for economic reasons.

Organizations struggle with how to approach WLB and the related malady of "Workaholism," where devotion to work becomes obsessive and other aspects of a person's life are devalued. Employees may want their employers to offer WLB options, such as telecommuting, part-time employment, and job sharing, but they need to understand what using these options entails. If an organization does not make its expectations clear, an employee may misunderstand and end up getting in trouble over the miscommunication.
Since the late ‘80’s, many organizations have been going through the difficulty of layoffs. Productivity pressures are increasing; global competition is rising steadily; and labor rates are now a competitive advantage as never before (personal communications, Dr. Seth Silver 3-1-04). Organizations are wary of letting productivity decrease with the possibility of employees using, or misusing, WLB options that organizations are spending time and money to offer.

More women are entering the workforce, and dual-income families are becoming more common. More than twenty years ago, women would not be considered for management jobs, whereas in today’s society, women are becoming more represented throughout the higher positions. The notion of WLB is derived from the changing nature of both work and families (i.e. longer work hours, non-standard work schedules, flex-time, increased numbers of women in the labor force, and an increase of “non-traditional” families) (Tausig, 2001).

In the drive to have fewer employees working longer hours, the organization may gain a short-term productivity boost, but then pay the price later in terms of an unhappy, unhealthy workforce. Having unhappy, unhealthy workers would seem to be more detrimental to an organization than the decrease in productivity. If workers are unhappy and unhealthy, they apt to miss more work due to injury, a lackadaisical attitude, and illness. Unfortunately, people differ in the amount of hours they want to work. Americans may alternate between the desire for more hours and the desire for fewer
hours. This decision is based on personal situations and economic outlook (Reynolds, 2003).

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) latest employment outlook, the average American’s working hours is higher than previously estimated. One reason for this increase is that those people with multiple jobs are now included. Still, the hours are rising slightly, while middle managers are working harder than their employees (Anonymous, 1996). American employees spend an average of 44 hours per week working, which is an increase of 3.5 hours since 1977, according to a 1998 study by Families and Work Institute (Tyler, 1999). Demographics encourage the rebellion against overwork.

To define the issue briefly, work-life balance is achieving the personal goals of managing and trying to balance time commitments between work and life outside of work. Some people want to work more hours, while others want more time at home. Many believe that work-life balance is something people will never fully achieve (Caproni, 1997; Tausig, 2001). It is not necessarily a matter of achieving work-life “balance,” but understanding where your priorities lie within both domains. FranklinCovey (Merrill, 2003) created a personal assessment tool that enables people to see where their priorities are. Obviously someone with children would need to devote more time at home, but at the same time may need to devote ample time to work for financial reasons. Whatever the motivation, work-life balance is important for HR professionals to understand and to put into practice. It is important to study WLB in today’s society because many
employees want to maintain their personal/family lives and their work lives. Human Resource (HR) professionals need to understand WLB and be able to address the issue with employees who are interested in achieving WLB. HR professionals also need to know which WLB options their company offers, such as part-time work, telecommuting, or a compressed workweek.

*Canadian Views of WLB*

Canadians seem to have grasped better the concept of WLB and seem to more often encourage their employees to understand work-life balance and avoid burnout than do American organizations. As mentioned by Dr. Silver (class communications, 10/03), Canadian companies, for example, often start new employees with three weeks of vacation, while US companies usually start their new employees at one week of vacation after a waiting period. Further, Canadian companies offer up to six months paid maternity leave, while US companies offer only six weeks. Why hasn’t the US decided to do these things for its employees?

Some American companies have divisions both in Canada and in the US. Often, the Canadian divisions and offices have better productivity, possibly from a happier and healthier workforce that has better benefit options (Waldfogel, 2001). The difference in amount of vacation time alone may be a significant factor. It is also perhaps a matter of culture, because it is a given in the US that if you are good at what you do, it is because of the hours you put into your work. In Canada, they seem to understand better that people need to have a personal life and a career at the same time. Grasping the concept
of WLB seems to be one of the more striking differences between working in Canada vs. working in the US.

Problem Statement
As noted, there appear to be key differences in how Canada and the US approach WLB and the related issues of employee benefits. This raises an interesting question: Are Canadian workers actually more satisfied, given their presumably enhanced benefits and access to WLB? There is a need for a study that critically compares Canadian versus American attitudes to work, how both countries view “workaholism,” and where the trends are headed in the future.

Purpose
The purpose of this qualitative research study and corresponding literature review is to examine the major difference between the views of Canadian and US firms with regards to WLB. This study will also look at the impact of offering WLB options on worker satisfaction and explore if making these options available makes a difference to employees. Also, this study will note some of the trends that are affecting business that may impact their productivity and competitiveness. The overall goal of this project is to identify trends in the workforce that relate to WLB and to inform organizations how to address this issue effectively.

Research Questions
This study will focus on answering the following three questions:
1. What is “work-life balance?”

2. What are the key differences in approach to WLB, between Canadian and US organizations?

3. What are the trends for the future, and what can US organizations do to increase the effectiveness of WLB without sacrificing competitiveness and productivity?

Significance of Study

Given the increasing number of women in the workforce, and with more men considering staying at home, WLB is at the forefront of “hot” Human Resource topics (Hall, 1990). At a popular level, there seem to be significant differences in the way Canadians and Americans view work itself. One purpose of this study is to identify if these differences actually exist, and if they do exist, what the US can do to catch up to the Canadians. Another purpose of this study is to identify what some organizations are doing to address WLB and Workaholism that other organizations should perhaps model.

HRD Practitioners can benefit from this study. One reason is because this paper provides overviews of both the issue of WLB and the issue of Workaholism and how organizations can start to address both situations. Further, there are checklists and tools that can be used to assess workaholism within the organization. Another reason HRD practitioners may benefit from this study is through the insight offered by the expert interviews in the field. Interviewing practitioners with ample experience can only enhance the validity of the information presented and the recommendations made.
HRD researchers may benefit from any new research surrounding WLB and Workaholism. Both of these terms are sufficiently misunderstood that it is beneficial to continue to study the differences between the definitions. Based on the research that is apparent surrounding these two issues, there is still room for improvement in the future. This paper will also touch upon key ideas for future research based on interviewee responses and opinions peppered throughout the literature.

Finally, organizations may benefit from this study by understanding better their employees. If an organization does not understand why a person acts the way they do, they may never fully have a valuable, loyal employee. It is important to understand why employees may want to work extra hours or why they need to go home early. An organization should understand the differences between employees and how to effectively decrease the conflict from those differences. Research results show that WLB and family-friendly initiatives can lead to significant improvements in absenteeism, recruiting practices, voluntary turnover, productivity, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, stress levels, and healthcare costs (Hobson, 2001).

Conceptual Framework

This study will draw from the work done by Hobson (2001), Cooper (1998), Reynolds (2003), and Spence and Robbins (1992). According to a study conducted by Hobson (2001), the main points of stress in a person’s life are not work-related, but family and life related. For example, the number one cause of stress is the death of a spouse or mate, which has nothing to do with work. Another study conducted by Cooper (1998) suggests
that there is a link between stress and poor work performance, acute health problems, and employee burnout. According to Reynolds (2003), American workers are not necessarily happy with the amount of hours they are putting in at work. Employees who work more hours are more likely to feel overworked, and employees who feel overworked are more likely to make mistakes on the job. Spence and Robbins' work (1992) on workaholism identifies three different workaholic patterns: compulsive-dependent, perfectionist, and achievement-oriented. With the help of these researchers, it is possible to analyze WLB, workaholism, and the differences between the US and Canada.

Definition of Key Terms

**Human Resource Development (HRD) Professional:** For these purposes, an HRD professional is one who works with Career Development, Organization Development, and Training and Development within an organization. A Human Resource (HR) professional and an HRD professional have interchangeable work demands throughout this paper because of the fine line that can be drawn about which profession will deal with the issues of WLB and Workaholism.

**Work-Life Balance (WLB):** Proponents of WLB argue that serious personal and work-related problems will arise when individuals fail to effectively fulfill fundamental life or family responsibilities (Hobson, 2001). As Sumer (2001) states, defining WLB can be as simple as saying it is the interplay between work and family. By this, the author is saying that the work-family relationship is what is in question.

**Workaholism:** Oates (as cited in Spence and Robbins, 1992) coined the term workaholism as a “compulsion to work incessantly and suggested some characteristics
exhibited by work addicts and the negative consequences brought about by this addiction.” There is little consensus about the meaning of workaholism beyond its core feature of heavy instrument in work (Spence and Robbins, 1992).

**Work Obsession:** An interviewee of this paper, LC, referred to work obsession as the equivalent to Workaholism without the compulsion piece. An obsessive worker is actually quite content in his/her job and works long hours only because of advancement or money.

**Organization of the Paper**

This project will be organized in the form of a literature review, along with six semi-structured interviews of HR professionals, three in the US and three in Canada. In Chapter 1, the project overview, problem statement, purpose and significance of the study, key research questions, and conceptual framework have been outlined. In the following chapter, an extensive literature review will be provided on WLB, workaholism, impact on HRD, and current and future trends of the HRD profession. Chapter 3 will target the methodology used to conduct the semi-structured interviews and give brief background information on the interviewees. In Chapter 4, the key research findings will be uncovered and analyzed in order to identify common themes. Finally, Chapter 5 will examine and interpret the data found in the literature along with the qualitative information analyzed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for organizations and HR professionals, along with suggestions for future research.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The focus of this paper is to examine the key differences between WLB and Workaholism compared in the US and Canada. First, it is important to take a look at the literature available under each of these subjects. Then, an examination of present and future trends will be discussed, followed by possible recommendations to HRD professionals on how to deal with employees who are Workaholics or who want to try and achieve WLB.

Work-Life Balance

Both Canadian and US organizations and governments have similar views concerning work-life balance. Many organizations aspire to be an “employer of choice” (Heslin, 2003). Usually, achieving this status requires an employer to offer its employees things that aim to improve the work life and job satisfaction of employees. Some examples of initiatives would include providing gyms, allowing job sharing, offering part-time work, or sponsoring weekend activities. Greater participation by women in management, the emergence of more dual career families, and work happening “24/7” (Haddock, 2000) are the largest factors driving the concern for work-life balance achievement by both Canada and the US. First, work-life balance should be defined and explained for these purposes.

Work-Life Balance Historical Overview

The concept of work-life balance has quite a history. Previous generations of employees held the mindset that the employer comes first. They believed in self-sacrifice and hard work in their careers. These people believed in commitment to their organization,
making Organizational Psychologists willing to study how this commitment could be increased. The term work-life balance was coined in 1986, although its usage in everyday language was sporadic for many years (Lockwood, 2003). Thus, in the 1970’s, Quality of Work/Life programs were adapted to provide employees challenge, autonomy, recognition, and participation in the decision-making process (Latham, 2002).

In the 1970’s through the 90’s, the economy began its downturn. This brought about massive layoffs, forcing people to view organizational commitment with growing cynicism. Also, since the mid 1970’s, women had begun to demand equal opportunity in the workplace. Newer generations of employees were emerging and they began to question whether they wished to “live to work”, “work to live”, or achieve a balance between the two. With the economic boom from the mid 1990’s to the millennium, the war for talent broke out, and those whose talents were being sought found an answer to their question (Latham, 2002). They wanted to have the option of maintaining a happy medium between both work and family. Thus, in the 1980’s and 1990’s, companies began to offer WLB programs to their employees. While the first waves of programs were set up to help women with children, today’s programs are less gender specific (Lockwood, 2003).

Some who write about WLB are stating that there is a “new economy” with which we are currently dealing (Rayman-Read, 2001). The new economy refers to a world in which people work with their brains instead of their hands. We have witnessed the partial transformation in the last ten years or so, with the introduction of the Internet and
increased automation. The knowledge worker is the new wave of the future. *Wired* magazine notes that the new economy is one in which innovation is more important than mass production (Rayman-Read, 2001). Keeping this in mind makes the concept of WLB even more important today, because work does not necessarily need to be completed at the office anymore.

**WLB Options**

Some examples of work-life balance options that employers can offer their employees are flexible work hours, job sharing, part-time work schedules, and telecommuting. Briefly, flexible work hours allow workers to decide how to spread out their eight-hour day between convenient hours (i.e., some workers find it helpful to work 8AM to 4PM or 10AM to 6PM). Job sharing is when two or more employees share the responsibilities of one job, while varying the hours they work to fit each other’s schedule. Part-time work schedules offer the employee the option of cutting a 40 hour work week into a 20 to 25 hour work week, which could mean a pay cut, but an increase in personal satisfaction. Telecommuting is when employees can work either part-time or full-time from their home (DBM, 2003).

*Telecommuting.* Telecommuting has become a very popular option in the last ten years. When an employee telecommutes, they do not need to be present at the office. They can conduct business as usual from their home and be in contact with the office and clients. The benefits of telecommuting include increased productivity, decreased real estate and travel costs, decreased employee absenteeism and turnover, increased WLB
with improved morale, and access to additional labor pools (Hrisak, 1999). If those who telecommute could not do so, they would choose other means to get the time off they need (Appendix 1). The bottom line is that telecommuting sounds easy, looks simple, and is appealing – but it takes effort and organizational flexibility to make it successful.

Proponents of balance argue that without the previous options being readily available to employees, serious work-related and personal problems arise when individuals fail to effectively fulfill fundamental life or family responsibilities (Hobson, 2001). The term “balance” itself can also have a variety of meanings, but for these purposes it “encompasses emotional, spiritual, physical, and developmental components” (Haddock, 2000, p. 30). A survey of 10,000 managers nation-wide in the United States found that WLB reduces stress levels, which in turn reduces health costs and absenteeism (Latham, 2002). There is a growing trend for employers and employees to enter into non-traditional working arrangements (Dajczak, 2002).

Although there are many writers who support WLB, there is still research that does not support WLB. Some organizations go so far as to offer perks such as dry cleaning, massages, banking, and hairstyling. Offering perks such as these blurs the distinction between work and personal life, exacerbating the problem that a WLB culture is designed to solve (Latham, 2002). Another problem is that too often, front-line managers may “convey the message, directly or indirectly, that flex-time scheduling creates more work for them, or that they are uncomfortable with telecommuting because they prefer to have their staff members working where they can see them” (Overman, 1999, p. 1). If
management only gives lip service to WLB initiatives, employees may be afraid to use them.

Along the same lines, Caproni (1997) writes that it is possible that the root cause of WLB is the caretaking work performed in one’s own home – typically done by women – is undervalued and underpaid. This author believes the only way to attempt to resolve WLB conflict overall is to first tackle the real issue of care taking in one’s home. Not only do researchers see WLB in a variety of different lights, the differences in approach to WLB in the US and in Canada is slightly different, as well. To be effective, WLB programs need to take into account individual differences.

The United States and Work-Life Balance

American workers put in more hours at 1,966 per capita annually, than their counterparts in any other industrialized country (Singer, 1999). Many companies are now realizing that without work-life balance options many employees are developing frenetic work patterns, which translate into reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, low morale, and high levels of dissatisfaction. In other words, the American workforce seems to be quite overworked in comparison to most other industrialized countries.

In a study conducted of 975 companies in the United States, childcare is the most prevalent work-life offering, as 95% of the study participants offer this to their employees (Seitel, 2003). According to a study conducted by the Families and Work Institute, seven out of ten families are either headed by a single working parent or by two wage earners
(Berns, 1992). The differences in family structure may account for part of the reason as to why WLB is such an important concept.

According to Berns (1992), about two-thirds of America’s 1,000 largest corporations offer their employees some type of help to assist in their home lives, while only about 5% of America West Airlines employees, for example, were taking advantage of the WLB programs set in place. Companies that are offering WLB options, but have employees that are not taking advantage should conduct a needs assessment to re-evaluate what WLB options are necessary. It is possible that the organizations are missing a key ingredient. A survey in the United States of 28,000 workers in 215 organizations found that stress is linked to poor work performance, acute and chronic health problems, and employee burnout (Williams, 1998). With such problems lingering in the workforce over WLB, the United States should be taking further steps to help their employees achieve WLB if they so desire.

The US does not seem to be making much headway in the implementation of WLB initiatives. Considering the number of home-based workers has increased from 4 million in 1990 to more than 19.6 million in 1999 in the United States, there should be more programs available to help these workers (Dajczak, 2002). The problem is, the majority of these workers have not been properly trained how to work outside their normal office and do not have the necessary technology or equipment to perform their duties.
The United States does offer employees unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Under this act, an employee is able to receive 12 weeks of FMLA if he or she has been employed for 12 months by the current employer, worked 1250 hours during the preceding 12 months, has 49 co-workers within 75 miles of the worksite, and has a serious health condition, a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition or begins care of a child by birth, adoption, or foster care placement (Keneally, 2003). Some HR professionals believe it is time for the government to redo this act to fit more with the context of today’s society. In other words, this act needs to be more tailored toward today’s problems, such as WLB, part-time employment, and management accountability for creating WLB options.

Increasingly, 44% of companies are beginning to hold management accountable for being sensitive to employees’ work-family needs (Singer, 1999). Canada has a slightly different approach to WLB, although the bases behind both of these initiatives are the same: to assist people in balancing their work and personal/family lives.

Canada and Work-Life Balance

Canadians, unlike Americans, have shorter workweeks and longer bouts of vacation. In a survey conducted by Duxbury (2003), almost half of the Canadians working for larger organizations feel that work and family are separate domains and that work does not affect their family lives. On another note, this same study found that 31% of male professionals and 38% of female professionals would leave their organization for one that offers more time for personal and family activities. This statistic shows the importance
family and personal lives can be to people in any area of the organization. The stereotype is that many professionals are climbing the corporate ladder because they involve themselves fully in their work, when many still want to have a life outside their work lives.

Not only has part-time employment increased in the US in the past two decades, it has increased in Canada as well (Statistics Canada, 2002). Although much of the growth in part-time employment is due to employer demand, an employer must still include family-friendly policies for every employee. There is quite a debate over whether or not part-time employees are satisfied in their jobs or whether they feel they are stuck in part-time employment. Statistics Canada (2002) found that nearly 90% of all Canadian part-time workers were either satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs.

Canada has recently created a new compassionate care leave benefits program. This program became effective January 1, 2004, and allows employees who take time off of work to care for a gravely ill or dying child, parent, or spouse, to collect Employment Insurance (EI) benefits for up to six weeks (Wyatt, 2003). Similar to the US, Canada created an Employment Standards Act (ESA) in the year 2000. One part of this act states that an employer shall give an employee vacation time of at least two weeks after each vacation entitlement year the employee completes. Also, an employee's parental leave ends 35 weeks after it began and an employee's maternity leave ends 37 weeks after it began (ESA, 2000).
According to Statistics Canada (2002), the majority of Canada's largest employers are not necessarily best practice employers. The reason for this is because only about half of the employees that participated in the Statistics Canada study in 2002 are highly committed to their employer, satisfied with their job and view their organization as an above average place to work. Differences exist in the US and Canada in respect to WLB, and gender plays a role in the need for WLB initiatives.

*Other Countries and WLB*

Some countries show even more forward thinking than the US and Canada in terms of WLB. A company called RWE Net AG, a German-based company which is the largest electricity distributor in Europe, is the poster company for offering an array of WLB initiatives. They have a company kindergarten, provide on-site day care nannies, offer three year parental leave with guarantee of re-employment, and offer the option of working part-time with flexible work hours (Jones, 2003). This organization is just one example of the exemplary WLB options offered in some other countries that are further along in WLB thinking.

*Gender and Work-Life Balance*

In the past, WLB was directed toward women, but now there are more men who are willing to stay home with the children and work part-time. More women work outside of the home in today's society, however, domestic responsibilities have not diminished. Both men and women are suffering from the daily juggling act of balancing family obligations and work (Singer, 1999). One reason for explaining why dual income
families cannot achieve WLB is shown in a study by Cooper, et. al. (1994). In this study, it was found that a combination of those possessing high work values and low relationship priorities tends to make them career- and self-focused. This focus detracts from their ability to resolve WLB tensions in a dual-career marriage. Wallis (2004) cites a study conducted by the Families and Work Institute in 2002, which states that for dual-career couples with children under 18 years of age, the combined work hours of both parents has grown to 91 hours. It is becoming increasingly difficult to raise a family, have a marital relationship, have a successful career, and still have time left over for yourself.

Women are generally less satisfied than men with their performance as a parent (Statistics Canada, 2002). This statistic is quite a concern because women are usually the ones that devote the most time to their children. In order for this statistic to be true, women may be comparing their performance as a parent against unrealistic standards. Since most contemporary women are both career-oriented and home-oriented, it is more difficult for women to see themselves as the parent their home-oriented mothers were (Cooper, 1994). Because of the financial and time demands of children, many choose to work an abnormal work schedule. Some families will have one parent working the day shift, while another may work the second or third shift so it is not necessary to hire a baby-sitter. Many women may feel this is not conducive to the family atmosphere.

Half of women and one third of men who work an abnormal schedule, which means they do not work the usual 9am to 5pm, cite childcare as the main reason for working these
hours (Tausig, 2001). Even with the efforts of technology and awareness, Catalyst found that 68% of women born between 1964 and 1975 expressed that being committed to their personal and family responsibilities acts as a barrier to their career advancement (Marjamaa, 2002). In other words, women are often passed up for promotions because of family responsibilities. Men do not often see this as a problem to their career advancement. Traditionally it is the woman who stays home with the children and takes care of the house, though men are moving more toward the family role.

WLB options, such as childcare and eldercare services, flextime, and telecommuting, have been portrayed as “win-win” arrangements to help today’s employees obtain a better blend between their work and non-work lives while providing organizations with a means of recruiting, retaining, and motivating their workers (Statistics Canada, 2002). The business case for family-friendly HR practices maintains employees who have a difficult time managing their work and non-work lives may suffer from productivity losses that can cost organizations in terms of decreased employee satisfaction, increased absences and turnover, employee reluctance to training and development, and reduced output due to everyday distractions (Statistics Canada, 2002).

Workaholism

Workaholism has recently been associated with work-life balance. Some researchers believe that without work-life balance options, workaholism thrives. Although quite a lot has been written about workaholism, rigorous research and theoretical development are still in the forming stages (Scott, 1997). Workaholism has been portrayed both positively
and negatively in published literature. Organizations may see workaholism as beneficial to their organization, while others see workaholism as a disease that is in need of treatment.

**Defining Workaholism**

Work is one of the basic and most important activities for people in today’s society. Work is considered to be second only to family, making it more important than leisure activities, community participation, and religion (Harpaz, 2003). Many people, especially those in the American workforce, believe that work is quite important, while others may see it only as a source of income. These approaches to work are identified by Senge (1990) and Weisbord (1987). Senge identifies work as being either “sacred” or “instrumental,” while Weisbord cites examples of Theory X and Theory Y views of work.

First, Senge (1990) defines work as either being "instrumental" or "sacred." In this case, the "instrumental" view of work is one in which work is a means to an end. Work used to mean that people needed only the basics of food clothing, and shelter. Over 20 years ago, it would take a person twice as long to earn as much money as a person does today. In other words, work has developed into a more “sacred” view, in which some believe their work has intrinsic value. In order to have a truly sacred view of work, business leaders should attempt to move through the barriers that are hindering both vision-led and capable learning.
Weisbord (1987) discusses Douglas McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y views of work. Briefly, Theory X management is defined as thinking all employees are lazy and need close management supervision. Employees who work in a culture that supports Theory X would most likely not have to worry about becoming a workaholic because of their lackadaisical attitude. Theory Y management, on the other hand, states that people are intrinsically motivated to work and can be trusted to do their job without close scrutiny. Employees in a Theory Y environment have more potential of being Workaholics because of the rewards created to motivate them. Some employees with workaholic tendencies may become greedy and feed off the rewards and recognition. Employers must be careful to have aspects of both types of management style present in their organization to achieve internal balance.

Even though the term workaholism is used more frequently today, there is still little consensus about the meaning of the term and the construct behind it (Spence, 1992). The term “workaholic” was coined by Oates (as cited in Harpaz, 2003), in which he states that workaholism refers to people whose exacerbated need to work may possibly be dangerous to their health, personal happiness, interpersonal relations, and social functioning. Cherrington (1980) sees workaholism as an “irrational commitment to excessive work.” Snir and Zohar (as cited in Harpaz, 2003) define workaholism as the individual’s steady and considerable allocation of work-related activities, time, and thoughts, which does not derive from external necessities.
For these purposes, workaholism is working to the exclusion of everything else in one's life (Tyler, 1999). According to Tyler, experts estimate that millions of Americans suffer from workaholism. Workaholism in this paper is viewed as people who overwork themselves to serve some purpose, whether it is to gain a promotion or to make money. Tyler (1999) also states that there is a difference between hard workers and workaholics. Hard workers, for example, do what is necessary to complete the job, and then take some time off if necessary. They work long hours for a short time with clear stated goals. Once these goals are met, their work habits return to the normal 40 to 45 hours per week.

Workaholics, on the other hand, report increased levels of stress, exhibit high levels of perfectionism, have more health-related problems, and are less likely to delegate work to others when compared with non-workaholics (Spence, 1992; Bonebright, 2000). There are currently three explanations for why workaholics dedicate an extreme amount of time to work. First, workaholics have immense enjoyment and fulfillment from doing work tasks. Second, some people may have an uncontrollable urge to work, even when little or no momentary satisfaction is derived. Third, excessive work behavior may be rooted in the desire for the emotional rush from receiving the rewards gained from hard work (Bonebright, 2000). Unfortunately, this type of work behavior is often seen positively by an organization that is interested in increasing productivity.

While the personal and social costs of workaholism appear to be quite extensive, workaholism is something that is often professionally rewarded. Many workaholics see perks such as fast promotions/raises and recognition by the senior executives. This feeds
the workaholic’s need to continue overworking themselves to be successful. Though workaholism impacts multiple levels of society, empirical investigations are impeded by a lack of validated measures (McMillan, 2002). In order to fully understand workaholism, tools have been created to assist either an employee or employers to understand the root causes of workaholic tendencies.

Traits of Six Types of Workaholism

The existence of different types of workaholic patterns may help fix conflicting observations and conclusions as discussed previously. Spence and Robbins (1992) identified six respondent types of workaholism. These were:

1. work addicts;
2. work enthusiasts;
3. enthusiastic addicts;
4. unengaged workers;
5. relaxed workers;
6. disenchanted workers.

The first three types reflect workaholism, while the last three reflect non-workaholic behaviors. Work addicts are those who are highly involved in their work, do not enjoy it, and are highly driven. Work enthusiasts are highly involved in their work, highly enjoy it, but not driven. Enthusiastic addicts are highly involved in their work, highly enjoy it, and are highly driven (Spence, 1992). Unengaged workers have low drive, low enjoyment, and low work involvement. Relaxed workers are not involved in their work, not driven, but enjoy their work. Disenchanted workers, on the other hand, have high drive, low enjoyment, and low work involvement (Burke, 2000). All six types of workers have something to offer an employer, but the employer needs to understand how to interpret different behaviors.
Table 1 (page 90) shows workaholism types and their relationship to work involvement, feeling driven to work, and work enjoyment. Briefly, “work involvement” measures a generalized attitude of psychological involvement with work, “drive” measures inner pressure to work that is maintained by internal fulfillment rather than external pressure, and “work enjoyment” measures the level of pleasure derived from work (McMillan, 2002). More research is needed to ensure workaholism and its implications are understood.

Other Countries

Most of Western Europe, along with Japan, have witnessed falling work hours in the last twenty years (Anonymous, 1996). This research suggests that European organizations are not as competitive as American companies, so hours worked is not as large of a factor as it is in the US. According to a study conducted by the Families and Work Institute (Tyler, 1999), employees in France work an average of 39 hours per week because their government has decreased the legal workweek to 35 hours. German employees work an average of 40 hours per week, while those employees in the United Kingdom work an average of 43 hours per week. This same study looked at vacation time as well. Americans take less vacation time than any other industrialized nation, with Americans taking an average 19 days per year, while Germans take an average 42 days per year.

More recently, Wallis (2004) cites some examples of more current research that show how overworked Americans really are. The US workweek still averages around 46 hours
a week, thanks in part to the sluggish manufacturing sector. But for those in financial services, their workweek averages 55 hours; for top executives in large corporations, it’s 60 to 70 hours, according to Catalyst. Generalizing the average workweek in any country does not necessarily pinpoint the problematic areas, such as financial positions in the US.

**Human Resource (HR) Implications**

HR needs to understand the different ways to deal with workaholism and how to spot a workaholic. When defining workaholism, many definitions do not include hours worked because people may work long hours for reasons other than workaholism, such as ambition or desire for promotion (McMillan, 2002). It was not clear in Burke’s (2002) research whether workaholics prefer an organization that supports workaholism or if workaholism is a product of the person. Those who are workaholics are not necessarily the product of an organizational culture that rewards such behavior because workaholic tendencies have been viewed as a personality trait (Spence, 1992). HR professionals should ultimately find out what the employees need and want, and tailor programs and adjust culture (if possible) accordingly.

HR professionals should be familiar with different scales that have been created to test workaholism traits. The Workaholism Battery (Spence, 1992), for instance, has been around since 1992 and may be a good tool to start assessing an organization’s employees. This specific scale contains adequate internal consistency, face validity, and reasonable convergence validity with both organizational and personal variables. Many executives value and often promote those employees who are hardworking and involved with the
job. The stress induced by working 50, 60, or even 70 hours a week causes some workers to seek counseling and others to have health related problems (Bonebright, 2000).

If HR professionals understand the implications of working extended hours, it may be possible for them to help those who are working excessively to pinpoint the reasons why. One main HR focus is that of improving the employees and their working conditions. Employees who have organizational commitment are found to have increased productivity and longevity with an organization. What better way to improve their working conditions than to understand their needs and help the organization to be flexible to those needs?

Another focus HR professionals should have is that of assisting the organization in becoming an “employer of choice”. Since most college students who are ready to graduate say that WLB options will increase the likelihood they will accept a job, the HRD department needs to work with the organization to become more competitive. Without the presence of WLB options, good candidates may accept a position elsewhere. The HRD department needs to think of both the employee and the organization in regards to WLB in order to have a successful program.

An organization must take into consideration the difference between the Baby Boomers and both Generations X and Y. The Baby Boomers are the generation that started working long hours and doing everything in their power to get a promotion. Generations X and Y see how this has affected their family relationships. Many in Generations X and
Y do not want to make the same mistakes their parents did, so they are focusing on having enough time for their families (Peterson, 2003).

Tyler (1999) says, “Lots of people want to hire workaholics,” but many do not realize these workers are not the most efficient. They do enormous amounts of busywork, don’t share responsibilities, and keep taking on more work. They are a danger to themselves because they are addicted to the adrenaline rush. HR professionals must help organizations to be careful of workaholic tendencies and to make sure their employees are working in an environment conducive to work, not overwork.

**Future Trends in HRD and WLB**

Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals have a bright and successful future ahead. The changing trends in the HRD field are important to note in order for both organizations and professionals to prepare for the future. Not only are there trends within the HRD field that should be discussed, there are trends surrounding WLB that are noteworthy, as well. The void left by the lack of present- and future-oriented research is filled by the fads that offer false solutions and lead to the poor reputation of HRD in delivering real outcomes (Bing, 2003). Without the ability to be forward thinking, some organizations, or professionals themselves, may get lost in the changes that can occur.

**HRD Trends**

Multiple trends, such as technology, changes, and the aging workforce are bound to influence the HRD field, Workaholism, and WLB. According to a study Rothwell conducted in 1996 (class discussion, Jan 24, 2004), there are at least 126 trends that can
be identified to impact HRD in the next ten years. Of these 126 trends, the participants in the study narrowed this list down to the top six trends of 1996, which are still pertinent today. These top six trends include: technology, globalization of business, cost control orientation, speed in market change, knowledge capital, and change. Some other trends found in the research (Ruona, 2003; Shim, 2001; Lievens, 2002; and Rothwell, classroom communications 1/23) include the aging population and the diversity of the workforce. All of the trends previously listed are interrelated, but only a few will impact the HRD field directly. The trends of technology, cost control orientation, speed in market change, the aging population and the diversity of the workforce will be discussed here.

Not only does Rothwell (classroom communications, 1/28) see technology as a trend for the future of HRD, but Lievens (2002) and Ruona (2003) also see this trend as pertinent. With the constant creation of new technology, HRD professionals need to stay on top of the training necessary for each new technological development that is implemented in the organization. Technology directly impacts WLB and workaholism by making a person easily accessible to work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Personal technology is more at fault then work-related technology, because the technology created in the work setting is normally timesaving. Technology and cost control orientation go hand in hand in terms of a future trend the HRD professional must be prepared to conquer.

Cost control orientation is another major trend that will influence the HRD field. Briefly, this trend deals with the costs of running a business and the losses a business must take to
stay alive. With the constant downsizing, mergers, and acquisitions that occur, employees are developing more work-related stress because they are forced to do the work of those who were victims of downsizing. This is one of the many reasons why WLB initiatives need to be created and why workaholic tendencies need to be understood.

Speed in market change is another of the trends listed above that will affect HRD directly. This trend deals with training a workforce that is innovative and forward thinking to develop products and services that are ahead of what other competitors may be doing. For instance, technology creates time demands. If employees are not taught to do their job quickly and efficiently, then the HRD department needs to take action, whether through talent development or hiring new people. Employees may feel the strain of the organization and overwork themselves to keep their jobs. This view impacts people’s social lives because believe they should constantly overwork themselves in order to keep the business thriving and to remain employed. If an organization misses an important product rollout, it is possible someone else will produce and market the idea faster (classroom communications 1/28).

Several researchers such as Rothwell (classroom discussion, January 28, 2004), Shim (2001), and Lievens (2002) also discuss a noteworthy trend of the aging workforce. Statistics show that the majority of the population will be eligible for retirement within the next five to ten years. The implications of this trend on the HRD field is that organizations will be asking the advice of these professionals to help them fill the
abundance of vacant positions with which they may be faced. One approach an HRD professional can take would be that of creating and implementing a succession plan in a given organization. This way, the organization can prepare for the future and ensure they will have the right number of employees with ample expertise to help run the organization when executives are prepared to retire.

The last trend Rothwell (classroom discussion, January 28, 2004) notes that will be discussed here is that of a diverse workforce. Ruona (2003) characterizes the increase in workforce diversity by an aging baby-boomer generation, more generations working, and varied knowledge/skill levels. The traditional role of the male is that of the wage earner for the family. Many women are now becoming educated and have the knowledge and skills needed to be successful career women. Men are now beginning to want WLB options offered to them so they can be parents to their children or help a sick parent. Men are now placing family as a higher priority, as opposed to working long, hard hours at their place of employment.

The trends described above are only a handful of those the HRD professional should be aware of in general within the coming years. As for work-life balance trends and where they are headed in the future, they have slightly different implications for an HRD professional.
WLB Trends

Lockwood (2003) suggests there are particular trends in regards to WLB with which HRD professionals should become familiar. These trends include new research, eldercare, the relief world, and total life planning.

First, new research is constantly changing the views of WLB and workaholism in today’s society. Many organizations think their employees should be thinking about work in a large capacity. In the study conducted by Lockwood (2003), people experienced the inability to engage in non-work-related functions because they are constantly thinking about work. Work itself is now changing to knowledge-based, as opposed to physical, making it easier to both think about and complete work at places other than the office.

Second, eldercare is a trend that HRD professionals need to increase their focus on. According to census data, 20% of Americans will be over the age of 65 by the year 2030. Lockwood (2003) also found that 40% of people who have eldercare responsibilities also have childcare responsibilities. Of those surveyed, 20% of the organizations offer an eldercare referral service. Judging by the statistics, more organizations should be participating in eldercare services of some kind. The aging workforce is a trend that affects WLB because the elder’s children are normally the ones that hold the burden of care.

Third, WLB in the relief world is increasing in popularity. The relief world includes organizations with both paid workers and volunteers. The challenges of WLB will
impact recruitment, retention, and willingness to serve in hardship locations (Lockwood, 2003). Organizations employing both paid workers and volunteers will be springing up more and more in the future and should consider WLB options for their employees.

The final trend noted by Lockwood’s (2003) research is that of total life planning. This approach was created to help employees understand the relationship between their professional and personal lives. It encourages employees to look at their lives and try to establish a balance that makes them happy. Total life planning is a paradigm shift in which employees will have renewed energy, enthusiasm for work, and increased productivity. With total life planning, employees can pinpoint where problems occur with balancing their work and life, and fix those differences.

Trends Throughout the World

The pace and scope of HR reforms differ from country to country. Wide-ranging changes are underway in the Netherlands, the other Nordic countries, and, to a lesser extent, in Canada and the US (Shim, 2001). Canada and the US have created legislation on issues such as employment, job security (dismissal under certain conditions), and permanent, fixed term employment. Employees in the US have a department and various agencies as their employer, while Canadian employees have a central office as their employer (Shim, 2001).

Globalization seems to be at the forefront of most business endeavors within the US and Canada. According to many researchers (Bing, 2003; Ruona, 2003), globalization is a
driving force behind many HRD initiatives. A context of global uncertainty adds to the unpredictability of the future for HRD (Bing, 2003). Ruona (2003) suggests several issues that go along with globalization, including crossing boundaries of time, space, geography, and culture, economic issues, and exploitation arising out of countries with fewer legal restrictions.

HRD professionals can either be reactive in the face of challenge and risk falling behind, or they can take advantage of the challenges. By doing so, they can bring increased legitimacy and weight to HRD efforts (Bing, 2003). With the trends emerging listed above, HRD professionals can stay on top of current events and globalization in order to help their organization remain both profitable and competitive. It is the hope that this study empowers HRD professionals to inspect the current state of WLB and workaholism, both individually and organizationally, to help in creating a culture that is conducive to both work and family.

Recommendations
Work-life balance and workaholism are important to the longevity of many organizations and to an employee’s health and well-being. Not only can HRD professionals help employees with trying to balance work and life, but employees can help themselves, too. It is clear that different policies and procedures are needed to fit various situations surrounding WLB (Statistics Canada, 2002). Some suggestions for incorporating WLB policies into the organizational culture are listed below.
The Changing Role of HRD

The changing role of HRD was discussed in the “Trends” section of this paper, but should be briefly touched upon again. HRD is changing to become more of a strategic partner, knowledgeable of the global marketplace, and technologically advanced. F.S. Hall and Richter (as cited by Covin, 1993) suggest organizations have avoided serious considerations of work/family issues because of a) the personal threat these issues may cause in many executives, b) the nature of the organization’s culture, and c) the perception that work/family issues are a woman’s problem. It is the role of HRD to show organizations how important work/family issues are to the future of an organization.

When compared with students, HRD professionals as a group a) disagreed more strongly with traditional childcare roles, b) not as supportive of a strong role of organization and government in managing the work/family interface issues, and c) disagreed more strongly with statements suggesting work commitment is lower among women (Covin, 1993). According to the research stated here, HRD professionals seem to understand the changing workforce and the different family structures that are apparent in today’s society.

HRD Professionals

Based on the information presented throughout this paper, HRD professionals can take something away from it all. HRD professionals are those in the organization who have the power to infuse WLB practices into the organizational culture. Haddock (2001)
suggests several ways of accomplishing this goal. One way is to identify each employee’s top values. Employees should come up with this list themselves and share it with the HRD professional. Using the list generated from all employees’ answers, a matrix should then be developed for rating these values in order to diminish conflicts between organizations, families, and individuals. An HRD professional may then coach clients and organizations through the process of shifting values to diminish these apparent conflicts.

Another suggestion by Haddock (2001) and Rothwell (classroom discussion, January 28, 2004) is that of encouraging the organization to incorporate WLB initiatives into the strategic business plan. From here, the organization should create a task force to analyze how productivity is impacted. The use of other organizations as a benchmark and the act of looking at all options available, such as flexible schedules, job sharing, and extended holidays, will enable an organization to get a realistic picture of their present situation and what they may need in the future. When the organization ties WLB to its’ strategic plan, it helps the organization to incorporate it into everyday operations.

The organization may use avenues such as the EAP system to incorporate WLB options. For example, Lockwood (2003) suggests that organizations can increase EAP usage by incorporating eldercare support and communicating it to the employees. Considering 70 million Americans will be over the age of 65 by 2030, it would be smart for HRD professionals to suggest offering this support to their employees. In addition, the Labor Project for Working Families states that 40% of people caring for elders are also caring
for children. These trends have led to the baby boomers being known as the “sandwich generation.”

Another suggestion is for HRD professionals to understand the interface of work and family relationships, along with the resulting impact in the workplace. This is a result on the growing diversity of family structures represented in the workforce during the new millennium (Lockwood, 2003). Covin (1993) has found that both men and women feel the impact of work/family conflicts. It is not always the man who brings home the paycheck, and not always the woman who stays home with the children. The diverse workforce and changing family structure go hand in hand when talking about workforce diversity. The failure of organizations to recognize the consequences of work/family interdependence is a detrimental oversight.

Tyler (1999) suggests taking the work environment quiz attached (Appendix 2) to evaluate your organization’s tendencies toward promoting workaholism. According to Tyler, when answering the survey questions, if you answer more than half with a “yes,” your organization’s work environment promotes workaholic behavior. There is no statistical background on using these questions, but that may be a viable suggestion for future research on workaholism.

HRD professionals can also work with unions to better WLB in their organization. Provisions could be added to collective agreements that could improve the “life” side of the work-life equation. There is now more emphasis being put on workload issues,
overtime, and work process designs. Unions are looking to provide child and eldercare to employees, as well (Spinks, 2002). Unions, and HRD professionals, always want what’s best for the employee and should take whatever steps are necessary to provide the employees with WLB options. Considering Hobson (2001) found that the top ten most stressful life events are not directly work-related, employers need to be sensitive to these events. Employers should a) carefully examine existing bereavement policies and consider increasing time allowed for family deaths, b) strongly consider adding hospice services to the benefits package, and c) train supervisors to be more understanding and supportive with grieving employees.

*Tactics for Organizations to Decrease Workaholism Tendencies in the Workplace*

Tyler (1999) suggests some guidelines an organization should follow to prevent workaholism. The suggested guidelines are as follows:

1. Discourage employees from taking work home.
2. Insist employees take breaks.
3. Limit the number of hours employees can access the job site, email, and voicemail.
4. Develop a mentor or peer-coaching program.
5. Encourage human interaction among employees outside of work.
6. Develop a wellness program.
7. Educate employees about the dangers of workaholism.
8. Hold a Workaholics Awareness Week.
9. Avoid offering raises and promotions based on hours worked.
If incentives offered are based on things other than hours worked, they are likely to be more effective. For example, incentives based on creativity, continuous learning, etc will be more beneficial to the employee in the long run and will give everyone a fair chance to get promotions. It is difficult, but if an organization follows some of the tips listed above, they will have a good start to assisting their employees in balancing work and life.

**Employees**

Employees can learn from reading the literature review presented here and attempt to create their own balance. A person can reflect on his/her own priorities, values, choices, and decisions. Haddock (2001) suggests a person tries to write his/her own mission statement with clear and immediate goals to try and achieve. She also suggests respecting other people’s values about WLB and to learn from others through active listening, coaching, mentoring, and 360-degree feedback. Tyler (1999) also suggests the use of a checklist to see if a person has workaholic tendencies (Appendix 3).

This checklist can either be used by the HRD professional themselves or by the employee. It is more likely that an HRD professional will use the checklist for those employees that he/she may believe are borderline workaholics. Sometimes a workaholic needs a reality check and sometimes the results of the checklist will have no impact on a person.

There are various tools and educational materials available about WLB and workaholism. HRD professionals should understand what is available for them to use and what will
help the employees the most. Not everyone stands behind the principle of WLB. It is important for HRD to see the warning signs of a workaholic and to help those who choose to create more balance. According to Caproni (1997), much research focuses on encouraging individuals to worry only about their own families and children, but not anyone else’s, which is incorrect.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this literature review and corresponding interviews is to gather information that is pertinent to defining and understanding work-life balance and workaholism. This chapter outlines the methodology used to conduct the interview portion of this thesis. Topics such as target population, qualitative interviews, sample, biographies of interviewees, confidentiality, and data analysis will be addressed.

Six semi-structured qualitative interviews have been conducted with HR managers in both the United States and Canada.

Target Population

The interviewees chosen should have diverse backgrounds in Human Resources. Many of them have been in the field for over 10 years, so they could be considered experts in their field. It is imperative to give background information on the participants to promote their credibility.

Sample

The semi-structured interviews were held with those in the HR field, either in a Manager position or higher, or who are consultants. Three interviews were conducted with HR professionals in the US and three were conducted with HR professionals in Canada. These professionals were selected from a convenience sample, derived from the personal network of the researcher. The purpose of these semi-structured interviews was to
examine the similarities and differences in the attitudes of Canadian and US employees about WLB options and to determine the importance of making these options available to their employees. These HR Managers were selected as a convenience sample, based on the researcher’s personal network. With the fast-paced work environment of today, willingness and availability are two main components of whether or not an interviewee decides to participate.

Data Collection Methods

All interviews were conducted over the phone for various reasons, including geographical location, time constraints of both the researcher and the interviewee, and project scope. The researcher sent the questions ahead of time via email to four of the six participants. The researcher wrote all the information by hand while the interview was being conducted. Afterwards, the researcher put the information into chart format, making the answers to the questions easier to read and analyze.

Benefits of Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative interviews were chosen for this topic. One reason is because the focus here is to get at the major issues that will need to be discussed further. Based on the answers found where the problem lies, quantitative interviewing or surveying can be done later to get an assessment of each problem that has already been defined. In this case, it would be impossible to conduct a quantitative study first, because the issues surrounding WLB and Workaholism have yet to be defined. Qualitative interviews allow for a semi-structured interviewing approach. In this way, the researcher can stray from the
questions created to allow for more complete answers from the interviewees. In this way, the interviewee can speak freely and not have to be pulled back to a particular topic because they may be speaking about something that is very important.

Interview 1 Biography

The first interview was conducted with GM, a consultant who runs his own business in Pennsylvania. GM has consulted with over 70 different companies in both the US and Canada with a variety of needs, including training and policy formulation. One particular job GM held includes working for AT&T to train their HR personnel (over 600 employees) how to become strategic business partners. He has over 10 years HR executive experience, including working HR at Gateway, and being an HR Executive on Wall Street, in which he was in charge of 29,000 people in 73 different countries.

Interview 2 Biography

LD was the second interview conducted for this project. She has a BA in Economics and has taken some credits toward a Master’s degree, but does not currently have one. She is the VP of HR with a large organization in Central New York. Her team consists of 13 people, all of whom are female.

Interview 3 Biography

This interview was conducted with PD in central New York. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science, a Masters of Science in Business Administration, and a Masters of Science in Political Science. He worked four years as an Army officer,
worked 16 years in Human Resources Management, starting at Hallmark Cards, moving to Paychex, then finally to the President of the HR consulting group at his current organization.

*Interview 4 Biography*

The fourth interview was conducted with LC. He has a PhD in Counseling Psychology. He was previously a career counselor in Toronto and the Director of YMCA Career Counseling Services for eight years. He started his own business, specializing in career counseling for executives. His expertise lies with helping organizations understand career development and forming a succession plan.

*Interview 5 Biography*

The fifth interview was conducted with GR from Canada. She started in communications and marketing, then moved on to working for a non-profit as Director of Training. She is now on the consulting side of a seminar company in Toronto. Her current position is the managing partner for the public seminar side, in which she deals with people development, leadership, and management development.

*Interview 6 Biography*

The last interview was held with ST from Canada. ST has a dual Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and Psychology from the University of Toronto. She has an HR designation from the University of Toronto, as well. She has been working in the field of
HR for 14 years and is currently the head of the HR function at a collection agency in Canada.

Confidentiality and data collection

Confidentiality was addressed separately with each participant to determine the extent to which their data may be associated with their identity. Interviewees were asked if their initials could be used throughout the project, in order to address the answers they gave. All three interviewees agreed to disclose the previous information for the purposes of this project. The interviewees were asked many questions regarding their opinion on WLB and workaholism, which would not jeopardize their careers or their organizations. Suggestions for improving WLB and workaholism in Canada and the US were also discussed.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected in this instance was used to answer the research questions stated previously, which are: What is “work-life balance?”; What are the key differences in approach to WLB between Canadian and US organizations?; What are the trends for the future, and what can US organizations do to increase the effectiveness of WLB without sacrificing competitiveness and productivity? By answering these questions, it is assumed that an HRD professional will benefit from the information gathered. It can also be helpful to future research that could be conducted within the field.
Interview Format

The following questions were asked of each interviewee. Most interviews conducted lasted between 30 and 50 minutes.

1. How do you define work life balance? What does your organization do to encourage WLB, if anything?

2. What are your personal opinions and attitudes about WLB?

3. Do you see any differences in the views of WLB in the US as opposed to Canada? If yes, what are some differences you have noticed?

4. What attitudes do you feel Canadian (or US) companies need to change about WLB policies?

5. Is it possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness? If yes, what advice would you offer a company who wants to address WLB issues and offer WLB options to its’ employees? If no, why do you think it is not possible?

6. What trends do you see in the future for HR professionals to pay attention to in regard to WLB?

7. What is your definition of Workaholism?

8. Some researchers and HR professionals view Workaholism as a disease. What are your views on workaholism?

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are those things that restrict the research, but are beyond the researcher’s control. An example of a limitation of this research would be the inability to generalize
from a small sample size. Three Canadian HR professionals and three US HR professionals are not enough to make absolute conclusions. Delimitations are the things for which the researcher has set the boundaries. An example of a delimitation would be that the researcher selected only eight questions in order to narrow down the study. Without narrowing the study, it would grow larger and the researcher would be unable to manage the data effectively or draw specific conclusions.

Data Analysis

Content from the interviews was analyzed for both common themes and general recommendations. Data from these interviews and conclusions drawn from the data is reported in Chapter 4.
Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the results from conducting an analysis of the answers to the semi-structured interviews. The purpose of the study was to answer the following three questions: 1. What is “work-life balance?” 2. What are the key differences in approach to WLB, between Canadian and US organizations? 3. What are the trends for the future and what can US organizations do to increase the effectiveness of WLB without sacrificing competitiveness and productivity? Specifically, this study’s purpose is to make recommendations for organizations that are interested in starting WLB programs and to educate the HRD profession on Workaholism. This study has also drawn conclusions that support the work done by Hobson (2001), Cooper (1998), Reynolds (2003), and Spence and Robbins (1992).

Briefly, Hobson (2001) found in his research that WLB and family-friendly initiatives can lead to improvements in absenteeism, recruiting practices, voluntary turnover, organizational commitment, stress levels, and healthcare costs. Cooper (1998) suggests there is a link between stress and poor work performance, acute health problems, and employee burnout. Reynolds’ (2003) work found that not everyone wants to work the same amount of hours. Spence and Robbins’ (1992) research states that there are different types of Workaholics with which people should become familiar. Based on the researchers listed here and the answers to the participant’s questions, there are some results that need to be discussed.
Overview of Study Results

Conducting interviews and researching the topics of WLB and Workaholism have helped to deduce three conclusions based on the above research questions. The conclusions are:

1. WLB is difficult to define.

2. There are not many differences in approach to WLB between US and Canadian organizations.

3. a) It is possible for US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options; b) There is a large list of trends that HR professionals should be aware of in the future, including eldercare, health care, and flexibility.

What was Observed

The interview participants seem to have some answers that are quite different, while their message is the same. Their complete sets of answers are attached in Appendix 4 (p.). The following eight themes were noted, one for each interview question asked:

1. It is difficult to generalize the definition of WLB. Based on the answers given by the six participants to question one, there are five different definitions of WLB.

2. WLB is a personal choice that may be more successful with support from the organization.

3. Canada is more advanced in terms of vacation time, while the US is slightly further along with trying to improve negative attitudes toward WLB.

4. Cultural attitudes and attitudes surrounding productivity need to be changed.
5. Yes, it is possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness.

6. Future trends include talent development and retention, health care concerns (with elderly population and a health conscious society), flexibility, and eldercare programs.

7. Workaholism is working to the exclusion of everything else in a person’s life.

8. Workaholism is usually a personality disorder, but can become a disease when a person is hiding from something (such as depression).

Three Key Findings

Finding One: WLB is difficult to define.

By looking at the interview answers (see Figure 1 below), it is easy to deduce that from the six participant answers, there are at least five different definitions for WLB listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 1: How do you define Work-Life Balance (WLB)? What does your organization do to encourage WLB, if anything?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1: GM</td>
<td>Describes the struggle between having enough time to balance work and your personal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
<td>It depends on who you talk to, and it is a fluid definition which is directed toward an individual’s situation. It allows people to have a balance between their personal and work lives. A healthy personal life overflows and has positive effects on their work life. This does not necessarily mean the person has to have children, they could have pets, older parents, etc. that they need time for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
<td>Understanding that you need to set goals and have core values. Always have personal and work life goals and understand them. Checking on goals regularly to ensure you are on track. If there is a problem, one needs to recognize there is a problem and get back on track.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
<td>“Balance” is not the correct word to use. It should be called work life priorities. There is no such thing as balance, because people fall into three different categories that show their main priorities: 1. Those who want balance and are not ambitious 2. Those who want to be successful, career is main priority in life 3. People want success and a family life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
<td>WLB is when one side is not over-consuming the other side of your life. If 90% of your brain is occupied with work, that is not good. It is not necessarily the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The basic answer to Question 1 is that WLB is the satisfaction of having a healthy combination of work and personal/family life for a particular individual. Since there are so many definitions of WLB, as supported by the research and by the six different answers listed above, a common definition needs to be formulated and accepted by everyone within an organization, at the very least. Two participants agree that WLB is not the correct word to use; yet they are not able to agree on a substitute. According to the researcher, work-life balance deals with the fact that serious personal and work-related problems will arise when individuals fail to effectively fulfill fundamental life or family responsibilities (Hobson, 2001).

Based on the participant responses listed here, we can come up with our own definition of WLB: the integration of work and family by setting personal goals and understanding personal values, so that neither work nor family consumes the other. This definition encompasses the main themes the participants believe to be true about WLB.

According to one participant, employees fall into three different categories. The first category includes those who want balance and are not ambitious. These employees will be the ones fighting for WLB, even though they do not work an exceptional amount of hours (nor do they plan to). The second category, those who want to be successful, find
their career to be the most important thing in their lives. The third category, people who want success and a family life, are those for which WLB programs should be created. Those who do not want to work for a living have no problems choosing home before work, and those who do not care as much about their family (or who don’t have one) are happy with choosing work over family. But, for those who want both a career and a family life are the ones that need the most help.

A common theme noted here is that of making a separation between work and family. It is difficult for a person to approach their boss and ask for flexible scheduling. It is not difficult for an employer to offer it as an option to their employees. Granted, some cultures may not warrant this change yet, but in due time, these options will become a reality. According to the participants, if organizations are not willing to help the employees, they will go elsewhere or start their own business.

Finding Two: Similarities exist between how the US and Canada approach WLB. According to the research, it seems as though Canada has done quite a good job of helping their employees attain WLB. According to the participant’s answers, though, both the US and Canada are roughly equal in their approach to WLB. See Figure 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 3: Do you see any differences in the views of WLB in the US as opposed to Canada? If yes, what are some differences you have noticed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1:</td>
<td>These views are the same across the board, and I have dealt with many corporations in both the US and Canada. Everyone is still driving for the dollar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
<td>The more progressive companies (those listed in the Top 100 to work for in <em>Working Mother</em>) have childcare on-site and eldercare programs. They are starting to realize the demographics of their employees. Programs need to be focused as such. This challenges HR today. They need to facilitate WLB and the employees will stay if they get the attention they need. US organizations who want to be employers of choice will offer WLB options. Personally, I require my team to use all of their vacation time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
<td>Some organizations are different, some in Canada are owned by the US, and vice versa, so it is difficult to generalize. Canada seems to have a greater emphasis on WLB because they offer more paid holidays and vacation time. A large part of North America is it’s work ethic. People put in as many hours as needed when it is needed. There is not a great sense of urgency in Canada as there is in the US. People in Canada seem to work at their own pace and customer service and productivity are not necessarily the main driving forces, as they are in the US. The US prides itself in anticipating customer needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
<td>There is not a great deal of difference. IBM is my largest client and they have the same policies worldwide (such as flex hours and job sharing). Organizations have policies set up to help their employees, but they do not decrease the demands on their employees. It is not easy to get approval for time off (management always says, “Yes, but...”). Since the 80’s, companies have been downsizing and merging simultaneously, with a focus on cutting the dead wood. In the 90’s, the number of jobs continued to decline when organizations merge, so the burden falls on fewer people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
<td>My organization has a Toronto office and a Chicago office. The office in the US is just as flexible, partly because they don’t track vacation time, but they get three weeks and can take more if needed. More is being done in newer industries, as opposed to the older industries, such as finance. Some companies make a program for WLB, but the culture may not support it. Those who leave at 5:00 pm, may be labeled as slackers. Canada has the reputation of caring more, but that’s not the case. US organizations are trying, too. With the US being a fast-paced environment, it is difficult to find the balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 6: ST</td>
<td>The US is further along, but Canada follows suit in terms of social progressions and support. The compassionate care leave act was recently created, which allows employees unpaid leave from work without fear of losing their job. This is similar to the FMLA the US follows. Changes are slowly being made. The UK is more advanced than even the US, and Canada is not far behind. There is a support system being created and best practices to look at. The legislative requirements for an organization falls under labor codes. Not all employers think WLB is attainable. The only difference between the US and Canada in terms of WLB is the support system in Canada is more socialistic. There is still much debate and agony over helping an employee’s WLB. The government needs to increase their support, but they have the pressure of younger generations. Canadian vacation time usually starts at 10 days per person. Employees are supposed to work for one year before getting this time, but most employers do not enforce that rule. Much vacation time is based on an accrual system, which is the manager’s discretion whether to allow the time off or not. Two to three weeks is standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2: Answers to Question 3*
As you can see from the answers, four out of six participants think there is not much difference in approach to WLB within the US and Canada. According to most participants, there seem to be some similarities, and some differences between the US and Canadian approach to WLB. A main difference between the US and Canada is that Canada is more socialistic and they offer their employees more vacation time. A socialistic society is one in which the means of making and distributing goods is owned by a centralized government that often plans and controls the economy.

Organizations are becoming more aware of the increasing difficulties surrounding the issue of WLB. Employees are starting to feel the pressures from both their family demands and their work demands. Work is potentially suffering under the pressure of both sets of demands and it would make sense that organizations would want to help those employees in need of relieving some of that stress.

There are differences between the US and Canada in terms of vacation time and maternity leave. Canadian organizations normally start their employees with three weeks of vacation. The US, on the other hand, usually starts their employees with no vacation, but after a six-month waiting period, the standard vacation time allowed is two weeks. Accrual of vacation time in the US is usually dependent upon seniority.

The US uses the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to depict their employee time-off, while Canada uses the Compassionate Care Act (CCA). The FMLA guarantees an employee time off for a sickness of immediate family or for themselves. This leave is
unpaid and can only be used if the organization meets certain criteria. The CCA is brand new to the Canadians. This act states that employees who need to take time off for a gravely ill or dying immediate family member, can collect up to six weeks of Employment Insurance. These acts are similar in nature, but the one the Canadian government developed includes a monetary supplement.

Question Four asks about attitudes that companies need to change about WLB policies.

Those answers are listed in Figure 3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 4: What attitudes do you feel Canadian or US companies need to change about WLB policies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1: GM</td>
<td>Corporations know they are overworking employees and they don’t really care. Those who are running the businesses are working harder than employees. Fundamentally, people want to get rich quick for doing nothing. Everyone understands the WLB issues, but they feel there is nothing they can do because they don’t want to fall behind in productivity. It’s all about competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
<td>We are dealing with a male-dominated workforce. A large portion of WLB relates back to children. Many men have wives who don’t work, but those that do sometimes need to stay home with the kids. An organization needs to think about its’ culture. When you are recruiting, someone may not be chosen because they are older, may have children, may have older parents, etc. and that’s not right. Some organizations conduct surveys, exit interviews, or questionnaires to see what the next step to keeping talent will be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
<td>The attitudes that need to be changed are cultural ones. To be competitive in the US, you need to understand the rules and play by the rules. Unless society undergoes a transformation, you may lose your competitive edge if society does not grow and change with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
<td>Organizations seem to promote WLB through their EAP system. Managers need to cooperate and facilitate these policies, and employees need to adhere to these policies. People who are ambitious or have increased responsibility cannot necessarily obey these policies. Both parties still need to deliver what they promise to deliver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
<td>It’s all about attitude. It’s not about the program; it’s about the culture. Changing culture takes an EXTREMELY long time. The Dot Coms had the flexibility, but overworked themselves. Organizations expect people to do more, and to do it quickly, but they don’t know how to go about instilling a “work hard, play hard” approach. There are generational gaps, as well. People leading the culture are older and have a more traditional attitude. People in their twenties will want more balance. It is now the person vs. the organization. Beliefs within people are one component to healthy work. People need their own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview 6:  
**ST**

Employers and senior management tend to be 50 and older, who have set values and ideas, and say “What do you mean you need time off?” The employee is thinking, “I will use sick days and lie to you to get the time off, then.” These senior managers think the work world should continue how it was when they started. They should start to listen to the newer generations because these potential employees have a lot to say. One problem is that senior management does not listen, and they are not open and responsive to changes, even if they make business sense. It is stressful for a senior executive who cannot handle to CEO, so this frustration is normally passed onto their employees. Senior executives need to take more of a leadership role and pay attention to their employees’ needs and be flexible. “One size fits all” does not work anymore. People job hop, looking for a better career, more money, etc. Employers need to obtain information from their employees. Senior management needs to put their money out there and spend today to get the return tomorrow.

*Figure 3: Answers to Question 4*

The answers to this question help support the idea that there are similarities in the way the US and Canada approach WLB. Whether an organization is owned by the US or Canada, there are certain management principles that should be present within the infrastructure of the organization. Without management support, a WLB program is going to fail. It is important that the WLB policies are set up so that a give and take situation can occur.

Culture is present in all organizations. In order to change an organization’s culture, one needs to be prepared for a very long process. If the culture will not accept the concept of WLB, then it will be an unsuccessful endeavor, so it is important to wait and verify that the culture is prepared for such a huge change.

Most of the employees in the US and in Canada are male. This factor used to stand in the way of WLB policies, but now there are more men who want, and need, to stay home
with their family. Women are not necessarily the ones who stay home with a sick child. Roles have been reversed so that fathers are expected to share some of this burden.

*Finding Three:* a) It is possible for US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options; b) Future trends include health care, eldercare, and flexibility.

According to the answers listed in Figure 4 for Question 5, it is possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 5: Is it possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness? If yes, what advice would you offer, and if no, why do you think it is impossible?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1: GM</td>
<td>Techniques like work sharing and part-time employment should be allowed in many corporations. Most of the people whose balance is out of whack are those who want more $, so they work overtime, and want to be promoted sooner, etc. Despite unemployment, many of these overworked people could try to get another job. The average sales rep, executive, admin, etc, are constantly around people who work hard, so they need to do so in order to look good. Some changes that could be made would include policy changes. The government first of all, needs to get more control over runaway high-class things, such as health care and education. People have to work harder in order to make up for the increased health care costs their employers are paying for. Health care increased 9% this year, while wages increased the normal 4%, prices are increasing, sales are increasing, but pay is not (which is why companies outsource and use part-time employees). Health care will help employees and employers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
<td>Yes, but it's not easy. Pilot the program and see how it works. Then fix the issues. Everyone should be working hard and being an equal player. People leave the manager when they leave the job, they don't leave the company in most cases. People want challenging work, too. Some organizations can handle WLB programs better than others. Make sure you have employee involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
<td>Creativity will help people cope with the stresses of maintaining balance. It is the organization's responsibility to offer flexible work arrangements, flex hours, and possibly offer the option of buying vacation days. This can be offered through a cafeteria benefits plan and will only hurt the organization when someone is on vacation. Organizations should also offer group rates for extended care facilities. Since we are dealing with the &quot;sandwich generation,&quot; we need to make sure their needs are being met. The employer has stress implications and cost implications, but sometimes the employer needs to take these risks to have happy employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
<td>YES. The problem lies in people not setting their priorities at work. They may know what their priorities are at home, but they can't seem to pinpoint the ones at work. They may be trying to please a lot of people. Mainly, organizations need to train their employees on how to prioritize their work. A person needs to realize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
<td>There is a lot of fear because employers do not trust their employees. They are keeping everyone on a tight leash and employees end up not being able to think for themselves. People want to be held accountable and feel ownership. It is tough if you are told how to do your job. It's possible to let people have more ownership and pride even at the assembly line job level. If you don't have smart people, get rid of them. It is tough to hire and fire people properly. Organizations are scared to take a step back and look at reconfiguring the organization internally. They do not want to take two steps backward to go ten steps forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 6: ST</td>
<td>Yes, tons of organizations have done it. Examples include American Express, GE, and some banks that are softening their policies. There are other ways of doing business that help the bottom line. People are reluctant to change, but they need the support to change successfully. There will be no sacrifice and there is evidence that organizations that support their employees have a happier workforce and employees who are committed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4: Answers to Question 3*

One common theme that stands out in these answers is that it is possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity. No one said it was easy, which is the challenge facing many organizations today. Typically, an organization should research other companies, such as American Express and GE to see what they are doing to have a successful program. Modeling a program from another organization’s program may not work in all instances, but it sure can be a good starting point.

The interview participants have also identified some points of advice they would like to offer organizations when they are starting to implement a WLB program, or have already established a program. The following six pieces of advice are given in the answers listed above:

1. An organization should offer both job sharing and part-time employment.

   Offering these simple options will show the employees that the organization cares about them.
2. An organization should pilot the program first with a small group before implementing it to the whole organization. By having a pilot, it is possible to fix all the problems before the whole organization begins to use it.

3. Employers and employees need to use creativity to have a program that fits the culture. If the same old things are done, nothing new will be achieved.

4. Employers should help their employees pinpoint their work problems. Many work-related and family-related problems deal with an employee not knowing how to pinpoint what’s wrong at work that is affecting everything else.

5. People want to be held accountable and to feel ownership for their work. An employer needs to give its’ employees a fair amount of slack in regards to their job and what they can do on a daily basis.

6. Employers should realize they might need to take two steps backward to take ten steps forward in the future. The money spent up front to create a WLB program will create employees who will possess organizational commitment, decrease turnover, and have a higher morale.

Figure 5 below shows the participant’s answers to the question concerning future trends in WLB:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 6: What trends do you see in the future for HR professionals to pay attention to in regards to WLB?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1: GM</td>
<td>- Be aware of rising health care costs. Hiring more people increases health care costs. If health care was inflating the same as everything else, there would be no problem. - Understand what underlies productivity improvement. - Keep up with technology to stay ahead of other corporations. - Outsource employees from elsewhere when it will help you to keep costs down. For example, corporations go to India, etc., for decreased labor costs. We are symptomatically sending work overseas. The dollar keeps dropping and that will eventually make it more expensive to go overseas. - Global economies drives what is happening more than ever. HR professionals need to see what is coming because we are in a global marketplace. - Give people the option to purchase their health care. - Understand the root causes of employee shifts and how to deal with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
<td>1. Commuters: people who want to work from home. Organizations need to have policies in place for these employees. 2. Travel: when gas prices are at their peak, it’s difficult to expect people to travel and not be accommodated for it. 3. Flexibility. 4. Congestive Commute Times: i.e. if you live in Atlanta and you are not out of the house by 6 am, you are waiting in traffic for two hours to get to work. Sometimes a company needs to allow employees to vary their start times. 5. Health: people want gym memberships, on-site workout facilities, and the time during the day to do this. 6. Career Development: for those who work at home. How do you promote them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
<td>The number of elderly will increase in population, making those in the “sandwich generation” more susceptible to stress. There will be an increase in retiring people and a steady increase in stress. With work changing to knowledge-based, more people will feel the strain of thinking about work when they are not necessarily at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
<td>1. Individual frustration of not being able to find WLB will continue to be a trend for those people in their 40’s and 50’s. People are trying hard, but they need to be prepared to give up rapid career advancement. Other intelligent people are making sacrifices to remain in their job. People will start blaming themselves, saying they need to be more disciplined. 2. Those in their 20’s and 30’s are making more demands on the organization. They are pushing these programs and are prepared to work less and still be promoted. They will win because of less intellectual capital in this age range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
<td>Dan Pink’s book will become true. He states people are going to quit organizations and become entrepreneurs. People will work for a while to get experience, and then quit. The internet and the WWW have changed how people interact and think. People are looking for meaning, not just for a paycheck. We are moving back to an entrepreneurial approach. The war for talent will continue. Older organizations will suffer because they will not get the talented people. Another trend is that more potential employees want to know about the organizational culture, vacation time, leadership philosophy, etc. A desirable candidate can write his or her own job description. Everyone needs to do something they love. Organizations will need to develop their employees on how WLB works. They need to train everyone, whether they stay or not. Employers need to ensure they have a succession plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HR is always trying to bring value to organizations. HR is constantly struggling with it and some HR departments don't know how to show they have brought value to the organization. CEO's want ideas to improve people management and to remain competitive and profitable. Some trends are apparent:

- Demonstrate the value of HR in a way (financially) that makes sense to others. We need to make sure others understand the value of HR to the organization. There has to be a measurable to show people.
- Be attuning to what employees need. Pay attention to the trends within their own workforce.
- Maternity leave benefits in Canada are optional for employers to offer. HR needs to make the argument for maternity leave so that their employees are covered.
- Be a change champion, especially strategically helping the organization. An organization needs to retain the best employees and HR needs to be the biggest part of that endeavor.

*Figure 5: Answers to Question 6*

The future trends discussed above are difficult to narrow down into a short list. Briefly, six of those trends will be discussed here. One participant feels strongly that health care will become more of a disparate situation in the near future. A person's WLB partially depends on their health plan. If the plan does not include elder care, there may be some problems with those in the “sandwich generation.”

Another future trend is that of flexibility. One participant says that if you are a good worker, your employer should recognize that and try to fulfill the needs you have in your family or personal life. As long as an employee does his or her job productively and to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the employer should at least consider fulfilling a request to work flexible hours or to telecommute.

Third, one participant believes there will be an increase in stress. Since work is becoming more knowledge-based, employees will feel the burden of working more
hours. Employees will end up working more hours because their thoughts while they are at home may be of work.

Next, there will be more demands on an organization by those in their 20’s and 30’s. Overall, this generation is pushing employers to think in a new way. They are prepared to give up the fast promotions to have time with their family. Some employees are even passing up promotions because they have their priorities in line and a promotion does not fit their personal plan.

Fifth, potential employees will want to know about an organization’s culture, vacation time, and training potential. In interviews, potential employees are asking about culture, how senior management acts toward others, what the vacation policy is, and what benefits are offered. Employers need to be prepared for the war for talent and do what they can to make their organization stand out from other similar ones.

Last, employers will need to be more attuned to what their employees need. If employers have no idea their employees are having a hard time with WLB, they will not be able to act proactively to solve the problems. If an employer wants to be an employer of choice, they need to conduct exit interviews, interview new hires, and ask for employees to fill out surveys to scan the organization for hidden problems.

From looking at the answers listed above, some predictions for the future can be pulled from them. One prediction is that of the importance of health care. With the aging
population and society becoming more health conscious, employees are going to want certain perks. Some perks would include elder care, the ability to go to a gym on their lunch, maternity benefits, and free health club memberships. Since health care is so expensive, employees will want to make sure they get the most out of their plan.

Another prediction would be that employees have the potential to be entrepreneurs. The war for talent continues and employers need to set themselves apart from other organizations. An employee also needs to set him or herself apart from the crowd of applicants. Because of this struggle, employees are beginning to think like entrepreneurs. They are able to stick up for themselves and know what they want from an organization. In other words, employees are getting smarter, and work is turning to knowledge-based work that needs these smart employees.

The answers to questions two, seven, and eight have not been discussed here because they ask specifically for opinions and do not fit with the research questions. The answers are important, though, and are still imperative to the research. The answers can be found in Appendix 4 on page 87. Chapter 5 will examine the findings listed in Chapter 4 in greater detail.
Chapter 5

Research Analysis

Several key research findings were uncovered during this study. Each will be discussed in this section, along with a brief review of the study, importance of this research on the field of Human Resource Development, recommendations for future research, and advice to organizations who are looking to incorporate WLB options into their workplace.

Brief Review of Study

The purpose of this study is to answer the following three research questions: 1. What is “work-life balance?” 2. What are the key differences in approach to WLB, between Canadian and US organizations? 3. What are the trends for the future, and what can US organizations do to increase the effectiveness of WLB without sacrificing competitiveness and productivity? Based on these questions, the key findings are listed below. This study began with a literature review and ended with interviewing three HR Professionals in the US and three in Canada. Based on their answers, there are three findings that can be deduced.

Review of Key Findings

First of all, WLB is difficult to define. Second, there are not many differences in approach to WLB between US and Canadian organizations. Third, there is a large list of trends that HR professionals should be aware of in the future, including eldercare, health care, and flexibility. It is possible for US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options.
Discussion of First Finding

As stated above, WLB is difficult to define. Based on the answers given by the study participants, there are several definitions that can be used to explain WLB. It is difficult for organizations to understand the concept and to help their employees if there are so many definitions that are out there. Organizations should survey their employees to figure out what they want. One participant says an organization should use employee input to come up with a WLB program. In this way, you can get employee buy-in and understand what your employees need.

WLB is an ambiguous term for a variety of reasons. The first reason being that no one has taken the time to actually define the term so that it encompasses the whole idea of WLB. Second, it is a difficult term to define. People may see it differently depending on their situation. Third, everyone struggles with WLB in their own way, making it difficult to pinpoint the actual problem.

This result emerged through the types of questions asked. Previous research clearly supports the fact that there are varying definitions of WLB. The first question asked of the participants in this research endeavor was to define WLB. This gives the researcher a feel for how passionately the person feels about the topic. Some participants did not like the use of the term “balance” in describing a person’s struggle between work and life. Similar to past research, there is not yet one word to describe the whole struggle.
An organization may want to define WLB for themselves and their culture. If an organization wants to be an employer of choice, they need to take certain steps to set themselves apart from other organizations. One such way is to let the employees define WLB and then create programs around that definition. This will give the program both employee buy-in and HR support. There is a multitude of options an organization could offer, such as telecommuting, job sharing, part-time work schedules, and flexible work hours (DBM, 2003). One main problem organizations encounter when using WLB programs is that of management support being lost. Managers may convey the message that flexible work schedules create more work for them or that they are uncomfortable with employees who telecommute because they want the person in the office (Overman, 1999). By having the organization define WLB in its own way, many of these such problems will be eliminated.

The researcher believes that WLB has been at the forefront of conversation for many years. Employees are overworked, underpaid, and, in some cases, treated as if they need to be watched all the time. WLB is an issue that will raise much controversy in the years to come because the younger generations are seeing the issues first hand and want a better life. If organizations do not jump on this bandwagon, they may miss an exceptional amount of talented people, who will go work for an organization that is in tune with the employee’s needs.
Discussion of Second Finding

There are not many differences in the approach to WLB and Workaholism between US and Canadian organizations. Not all participants have worked with both US and Canadian organizations, but it is safe to assume in this research that there are not many differences between the US and Canadian approach to WLB. These differences can exist because of many different factors, including government influence, organization willingness to change, entrepreneurship, and the different mentality between the two countries.

This result emerged because of where a company is based versus who owns it. Just because a person works in the US does not mean a US person who adopts US principles owns the organization. It means the organization is located in the US. It is completely possible to have an organization with multiple locations in a variety of countries have different principles and cultures. Some change their policies based on where they are located, so it is difficult to assume that an American organization will have the same policies as other American organizations, and so on.

Also, some CEO's and senior management are more forward-thinking than others. If the leader of the organization is pushing for WLB policies, it is more likely that these potential policies will become a reality. These types of people are truly entrepreneurs and are staying on the cutting edge of what employees need and deserve. If an organization wants to become an employer of choice, they need to re-evaluate where they are going and where they have been. Since the creation of Quality of Work/Life
programs in the 1970’s, we have come a long way in terms of helping employees cope with balancing their work and family lives (Latham, 2002). Organizations need to continue to make this a potential reality for their employees.

This researcher believes that the government, in some cases, may need to step in and help organizations make the necessary changes. Since Americans put in more hours at 1,966 per capita than any other industrialized nation, there is a big problem with how hours worked are being handled (Singer, 1999). Organizations do not necessarily want to be told they have to offer these programs, but it would be helpful if they had support from the government in some way, shape, or form.

Discussion of Third Finding (3a)

It is possible for US and Canadian organizations to increase the effectiveness of WLB options. One participant used various examples of organizations who are already putting this into practice. Those organizations include American Express, GE, and some companies in the banking industry. If organizations begin modeling their policies after those used in these organizations, it will make it easier for an organization to get started.

An organization should ensure their workforce is a happy, healthy one. If the workforce is neither of these, they will be likely to turnover, continue to be unproductive, have minimal company loyalty, and increase their amount of absences from work. Research (Spence, 1992; Bonebright, 2000; Hobson, 2001; Williams, 1998) shows that all of these problems are interrelated to the issues surrounding WLB and Workaholism.
This result emerged due to the experiences of the participants in this research. Since the participants have diverse professional backgrounds, all ending currently in HR, they may see just how different one organization can be from the next. Most of the participants agree that it is possible to have effective WLB programs without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness. Although this road is not an easy one, it is a possible one. A common problem is that the number of home-based workers has increased from 4 million to more than 19.6 million in fewer than 10 years, and there are few programs created to help these workers transition (Dajezak, 2002).

The researcher agrees that it is possible to increase productivity and performance while offering WLB options to employees. If employees are given an incentive, such as working flexible hours (whatever those hours may be), they will more than likely to increase their productivity if this option is right for them. It should be communicated that an employee will do what is necessary to keep up his or her end of the bargain, as will the employer. If either party is delinquent on the deliverables, they will need to rethink the options that are available. An organization, and an employee, needs to be cautious when entering this type of agreement.

Discussion of Third Finding (3b)

Understanding the trends for the future is very important to an organization’s longevity. The participants in this research identified over 30 trends of importance in the near
future. Some of these trends match past research, while others are new trends to think about and prepare for in the future.

This result emerged because different industries have different issues with which they need to address. Many industries are now in need of knowledge-based employees (i.e. HRD, Computers, or Management). Their employees are not typical ones, in which they go to work, produce something material, and come home. With the increase of the Internet, voicemail, email, and pagers, employees have access to work 24/7 (Haddock, 2000). Organizations need to be sensitive to this fact and, judging by the participant’s answers, there is hope that organizations will be able to deal with these issues in the near future.

Rothwell (classroom discussion, Jan 24, 2004) found at least 126 trends that can be identified to impact the field of HRD alone within the next 10 years. Of these trends, the top 6 include technology, globalization of business, cost control orientation, speed in market change, knowledge capital, and change. All of these trends are interrelated, and can be viewed in conjunction with those the participants in this study identified.

The researcher believes that trends for the future include rising concerns surrounding health care and an increase in the push for WLB programs from younger generations. Health care has been a constant problem and needs to be addressed. Organizations are consuming a lot of the financial burden, but the employees are unaware this is taking place. They are concerned with their bills and their responsibilities. If we could push for
health care reform, employees and organizations can benefit. Younger generations seem
to be the fire surrounding the push for WLB programs. If these younger generations are
concerned with WLB, organizations need to take note and try to be an employer of
choice. Potential employees have a variety of options to consider when finding a job.
They may choose another organization that has better policies and a better culture.

*Importance for HRD professionals*

The research discussed in this paper is extremely important to HRD professionals. Listed
below are the top 10 points HRD professionals can take from this research from a
practical standpoint:

1. It is imperative that HRD professionals are familiar with both WLB and
   Workaholism. Using the research presented here, HRD professionals can
   understand how WLB has evolved, how to implement a WLB program, and what
trends will be important in the future.

2. In terms of Workaholism, HRD professionals can learn from this paper by
   understanding the signs of Workaholism, by using the questionnaires attached to
   see if Workaholism tendencies are apparent in your workplace, and by looking at
   whether or not something can be done to help a person who is a Workaholic.

3. This research helps an HRD professional to understand the variety of policies they
   can have in their organization which are related to WLB. Some examples of
   organizations to model these programs after include American Express and GE.

4. The participants of this research give six points of advice that are easy to
   understand, and will help an organization who wishes to create WLB policies.
5. Many employees are choosing to telecommute. HRD professionals need to make sure these employees have better technology, the ability for advancement, Career Development counseling, and a clear set of expectations surrounding their transition.

6. Maternity leave times differ. HRD professionals need to know what their company allows, what the laws allow, and if there is anything else their employees need.

7. Canada is more advanced in terms of vacation time. HRD professionals in the US should evaluate what is important to their employees to see if an increase in vacation time is an adequate benefit to offer.

8. Remember, it is possible to offer WLB options without sacrificing productivity and competitiveness.

9. Knowledge workers have a harder time separating work from their personal life. HRD professionals can make rules surrounding what times they have access to the building, to voicemail, etc.

10. Work-Life Balance does not mean the same thing to everyone. Take the time to find out what it means to your organization and it will be well worth it.

*Importance for HRD Researchers*

The research discussed in this paper is important for HRD researchers to read and understand. Researchers can benefit from any new findings surrounding WLB and Workaholism. Based on the ambiguity surrounding both of these issues, there is plenty of room for future research. It is important for HRD researchers to analyze the research
conducted here, so they may understand some of the underlying causes of the issues surrounding WLB and Workaholism. Researchers can narrow down their scope to try and make conclusions that are more accurate than conducting semi-structured interviews.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should continue to evaluate gender differences (Bonebright, 2000). Stereotypically, men have always worked longer hours than women and therefore get the job promotions. Future research should look at men and women in similar industries in both the US and Canada to explain how hours worked factors into the equation in regard to promotions and pay increases.

Another avenue of research could include finding out if women or men are more susceptible to workaholism tendencies and therefore are more able to be burnt out. A good research example would include a look at the finance industry, where they are expected to put in long hours and where the field is dominated by men. Looking at the finance industry in both the US and Canada will help determine if the differences in vacation time, for example, have any bearing on Workaholic tendencies.

The term “work-life balance” needs to have a universal definition that everyone can understand. Researchers could also ask employees within various age ranges who work in similar industries within the US and Canada what they want out of life; whether they want to be home with their family more, whether they are stressed, and what the organization could do to help the employees. By breaking this information down by age
range, it will be interesting to see what trends emerge. HRD professionals could then see what they will need to prepare for in the future to make their workforce happy.

**Conclusion**

Organizations can benefit from this research. First, they can look at real-life answers from real-life people who are working in the field of HRD or HR. These professionals have first-hand knowledge as to where trends are headed and some advice to offer organizations about offering WLB programs to their employees. Second, they can look at future research options and maybe invest some money into answering a lot of the questions surrounding the issue of WLB. Third, organizations can see the value of their employees through this research. Their employees truly have problems that the organization can help them solve, for a minimal cost.

The researcher gained an abundance of knowledge by interviewing six HR professionals and researching WLB and Workaholism. An HR professional is constantly looking out for his/her employees and tries to help them. It is important to note that every person and every organization is different. Both need to understand the values they possess to function in every day life. An HR professional who wants longevity in their career should note future trends and try to help their organization stay on top of those trends. The war for talent is far from over; organizations need to know how to fight for these excellent employees.
Ralph Waldo Emerson says, "Life consists in what a man is thinking of all day." This quote summarizes what WLB and Workaholism studies are all about. It is important to understand what people want in their lives, and, in most cases, what they want ends up consuming most of their thoughts on a daily basis. This research is important to HRD researchers, HRD professionals, organizations, and employees. Hopefully more studies such as these will be conducted to examine what is needed to help make employees happy with their work lives and their personal/family lives.
References


Organizational Dynamics, Winter, 5-17.


Appendix 1

How teleworkers would manage their personal needs if they couldn’t telework:

(by Hrisak, 1999)

- 30% would take personal leave
- 17% would take sick leave
- 14% would leave early
- 13% would have someone else do it
- 11% would go to work late
- 9% would leave, then return to work
- 8% would take a leave of absence
Appendix 2

Work Environment Quiz

If you answer “yes” to the following questions, your company may have a work environment that promotes work addiction.

- Is the workplace fast-paced, with little time to casually talk with co-workers or supervisors?
- Does the work environment feel cold, sterile or devoid of human interaction?
- Does the workplace thrive on crisis, chaos, and pressure?
- Does the success of the company hinge on employees putting in overtime on weekdays, weekends, or holidays?
- Are employees constantly in a hurry or racing against the clock?
- Is it necessary for employees to juggle many activities or projects at one time to keep up on the job?
- Are employees put under the gun with short notice of high-pressure deadlines?
- Is there a high incidence of stress-related illnesses among employees?
- Are socializing and close relationships minimized or discouraged?

Source: *Spinning Wheels* by Kathryn Tyler, HR Magazine 1999.
Appendix 3
Signs of Workaholism

The following questions may indicate an employee has an obsession with work. Answering “yes” to a handful of the questions does not constitute workaholism, but more “yes” answers may mean an employee is at risk.

- Does the employee get more excited about work than about anything else?
- Does the employee regularly work through lunch or read work-related materials during lunch?
- Does the employee often work—or call work—during planned time off?
- Does the employee have difficulty delegating work to others?
- Does the employee work more than 55 hours per week?
- Does the employee work far beyond what is reasonably expected to meet his job requirements?
- Does the employee find it “necessary” to work late and on weekend, whether or not it is a busy time?
- Does the employee appear exhausted or high-strung?
- Does the employee seem to have a personal life? Does he talk about his family, friends, or weekend activities?
- Does the employee seem physically rigid? Does he complain of back pain, headaches, ulcers, or health problems?
- Does the employee walk or talk very fast?
- Does the employee regularly take work home?
- Does the employee underestimate how long a project will take and then rush to complete it?

Source: *Spinning Wheels* by Kathryn Tyler, HR Magazine 1999.
Appendix 4: Interview Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Question 2: What are your personal opinions about WLB?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1: GM</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is critically important for a person to achieve WLB. Most corporations I work with want to get increased productivity by taking more time away from life. Productivity is gained primarily through technology and through adding women to the workforce. Productivity, according to many corporations, is achieved by working longer hours. This condition is a serious one wherever I consult. Nine to five does not always happen to people today. There are pockets of areas where bureaucracy has taken over because of inefficiency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview 2: LD</td>
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<tr>
<td>An organization can do what they can to make these options a reality. They must be cautious with how and to whom you are authorizing to use these options. Having a non-exempt employee, for example, work one day at home may be more difficult because of the laws surrounding a non-exempt employee. An organization needs to cover its’ bases. Non-exempt employees should not be overlooked because they are important to organizations. Maybe an option would be to let them come in later and stay later. Let the employees come up with ideas on how WLB will work. The advice I give to managers is that things should be equitable, not equal. A person needs to feel good about how the options work for them. Personally, I work with an all-female department who are mothers. I am open to flexibility as long as my team does their job well and keeps me informed.</td>
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<td>Interview 3: PD</td>
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<td>The description I gave for defining WLB is my personal belief. I think everyone should set goals (both personal and work-related), put them in order of importance, and try to live by it. If something is out of whack, then you should work toward fixing it.</td>
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<td>Interview 4: LC</td>
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<td>WLB is a major issue with more women entering management roles. Statistics show that seven out of ten managers in 2010 will be women. Currently in larger organizations, women occupy 50% of the management positions. Time zone changes make management different with other countries, which make many managers frustrated and worn out.</td>
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<td>Interview 5: GR</td>
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<td>WLB is not realistic. It is a challenge because of technology. Everything happens so quickly. Organizations have not done a good job of allowing for WLB. Most managers are doing, managing, and leading. Managers do not have the time to tend to each person’s needs. Good, smart people are leaving organizations because they do not want to be kept in boxes. They want their freedom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview 6: ST</td>
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<tr>
<td>WLB is a personal choice. Companies can help support the ultimate goal, but most of it is personal preference. I have small children and the ability to take time off or to work from home is valuable to my WLB. Studies in Canada show that organizations are starting to offer more programs, such as eldercare, as older generations are retiring. This aging population has changed the retirement age in Canada. People need to manage stress overall and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Since most companies do not support WLB, it’s difficult for a person to achieve their balance. It is proven that some of those organizations have employees use more sick time, have higher absenteeism, and are the cause of various other problems in an organization. At my company, wellness is not stressed, but money is.</td>
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</table>
### Question 7: What is your definition of “Workaholism?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview 1:</strong>&lt;br&gt;GM</td>
<td>The problem is intrinsic to the nature of the workaholic. Some are working like crazy and then go home and work like crazy, too.</td>
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<td><strong>Interview 2:</strong>&lt;br&gt;LD</td>
<td>A person who thinks work is the most important thing in their lives, above their personal life and family life. Some people may view me as a workaholic, because I may stay late some nights when my husband is working. But I have things to do at work, and I am still going home to be with my husband when he gets home.</td>
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<td><strong>Interview 3:</strong>&lt;br&gt;PD</td>
<td>Working without an end result in mind. In other words, it’s like going on a trip without a destination. It is easy for people who don’t have a mission or meaning in their life to become a workaholic.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interview 4:</strong>&lt;br&gt;LC</td>
<td>It is a disease in which people cannot stop themselves from working. Many of them are using work to hide from something psychologically wrong. They are trying to fill a void that will never go away. A work lover, on the other hand, is someone who thinks of work as a hobby and they enjoy what they do. Only about 20% of the population is in this category. There are also some people who have a work obsession. This work obsession should be a more common name for overwork than the term workaholism.</td>
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<td><strong>Interview 5:</strong>&lt;br&gt;GR</td>
<td>Putting your job before everything else in your life. If you think of work first, or 100% of the time, you are a workaholic. This is a symptom for people trying to avoid other things. They may have marital problems or not social life. People use it as a crutch, but they must be a complete person. If you are someone who needs control and who needs to feel good about results, you have workaholic tendencies. It is not healthy to validate yourself by your job. If you are a person who has no personal life, if something happens at work, they may beat themselves up. You can see this with consultants. A lot of times, they beat themselves up when they get poor evaluations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interview 6:</strong>&lt;br&gt;ST</td>
<td>The exclusion of everything in one’s personal life to all else by doing work.</td>
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### Question 8: Some researchers and HR professionals view Workaholism as a disease, while some think it is a personality type. What are your views on Workaholism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview 1:</strong>&lt;br&gt;GM</td>
<td>I have dealt with a case where I sent someone home for overworking him or herself, and they went home and worked the rest of the day from their home. HR executives should make employees go home, but since the person, not the company, causes workaholism it is difficult for a company to help someone.</td>
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<td><strong>Interview 2:</strong>&lt;br&gt;LD</td>
<td>Could be either one. It becomes a disease only when it is masking other issues, such as depression or loneliness. Psychological support may solve the problem. Mainly, I think it is a personality thing. It can manifest in different ways, depending on personal views. You do not get more promotions or viewed as the best employee if you work 24 hours a day. Working that much doesn’t mean you are effective. When you don’t have your job, you will have your family. Everyone has to work, but when you can balance, you can be one of the best employees. Some people get work done all day, while others stand around and chat, and end up having to stay late because they socialized. Personally, I do not allow non-exempt employees to work overtime unless they have approval for two reasons: one being the overtime pay, and two being the fact that they should be</td>
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productive enough during the day where they should not need to stay late.

| Interview 3: PD | I think it is more of a personality trait. Certain people fix on things and work toward them. Everyone has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder to a certain degree, but people need to learn how to manage it. If you have no other meaning in your life, it is difficult to back out of your work. |
| Interview 4: LC | Workaholism is a disease. There tend to be more women workaholics than men. Women are trying to be “Supermom,” and it’s not working. They are getting burnt out. |
| Interview 5: GR | Both. Type A personalities are driven, competitive, and predisposed to workaholism. It is a disease, but difficult to stop if the rest of your life has no meaning. |
| Interview 6: ST | Workaholism is a personal choice. We all make our own decisions. It is not a disease because there is no decay, as there is with cancer. Sometimes depression is even a choice. Workaholism is a preference and depends on the individual. If that’s what I enjoy doing, I don’t notice time ticking by, then there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. If there are other competing demands on a person, you need to look at your behavior and your choices to decide what to do. Workaholism is a behavior that is habit-forming, difficult to change, and may be problematic to an outsider, while the individual may not share that same opinion. |
Table 1
Workaholism Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workaholism Types</th>
<th>Work Involvement</th>
<th>Feeling Driven</th>
<th>Work Enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Enthusiasts</td>
<td>Hi</td>
<td>Lo</td>
<td>Hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Addicts</td>
<td>Hi</td>
<td>Hi</td>
<td>Lo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic Addicts</td>
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<td>Hi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unengaged Workers</td>
<td>Lo</td>
<td>Lo</td>
<td>Lo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relaxed Workers</td>
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<td>Lo</td>
<td>Hi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disenchanted Workers</td>
<td>Lo</td>
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<td>Lo</td>
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Table taken from Burke (2002).